



NEWS RELEASE

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NEBRASKA VR OBSERVES NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH IN OCTOBER

Nebraska VR today announced its participation in National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October.

The purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month is to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is "My disability is one part of who I am."

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

"This year's theme encapsulates the important message that people with disabilities are just that — people," said Jennifer Sheehy, Acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy. "And like all people, we are the sum of many parts, including our work experiences. Disability is an important perspective we bring to the table, but, of course, it's not the only one."

Nebraska VR helps people with disabilities, prepare for, obtain, and maintain employment while helping businesses recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. Reflecting this year's theme, throughout the month, Nebraska VR will be engaging in a variety of activities to educate Nebraskans on disability employment issues and the role they play in fostering a disability-friendly work culture. These efforts include business outreach, a professional clothing drive, television and radio interviews, information booths, and a Disability Employment Awareness Month Forum.

"Nebraska VR is proud to be a part of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said Nebraska VR Director Mark Schultz. "We want to spread the important message that a strong workforce is one inclusive of the skills and talents of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities."

To learn more visit Nebraska VR's website <http://www.vr.nebraska.gov/>

Employers and employees in all industries can learn more about how to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month and ways they can promote its messages — during October and throughout the year — by visiting the ODEP website at www.dol.gov/odep/.